



DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE

Deaths and Injuries

Alcohol is the single greatest factor involved in motor vehicle deaths and injuries.

In 1996, 41% of all motor vehicle-related fatalities involved alcohol. This translates to 17,241 alcohol-related deaths, or an average of one every thirty minutes. At least another 1,000,000 people were injured in 1996 in crashes involving the presence of alcohol.

About 3 in every 10 Americans will be involved in an alcohol-related crash at some time in their lives.

In 1996, 31% of all fatal crashes on weekdays were alcohol-related, compared to 54% on weekends. In total in 1996, alcohol was involved in 41% of all fatal traffic crashes.

The highest intoxication rates in fatal crashes in 1996 were recorded for drivers 21-24 years old (27%), followed by ages 25-34 (26%) and 35-44 (22%).

One alcohol-related traffic fatality is estimated to cost society \$797,000. Each alcohol-related injury averages \$19,200. In 1994, alcohol-related traffic crashes were estimated to cost our nation over 45 billion dollars.

Research shows that, in single vehicle crashes, the relative fatality risk for drivers with a BAC between .05 and .09 is over 11 times greater than for drivers with a BAC of zero.

The rate of alcohol involvement in fatal crashes is nearly three and one-half times as high at night as during the day. For all crashes, the alcohol involvement rate is nearly five times as high at night.

Approximately 1.4 million drivers were arrested in 1995 for driving under the influence of alcohol or narcotics. This is an arrest rate of 1 for every 123 licensed drivers in the United States.

It is estimated that 2.6 million drunk driving crashes each year victimize 4 million innocent people who are injured or have their vehicles damaged. *Miller, Ted et al. Highway And Crash Costs in the U.S. by Victim Age, Driver Age, Restraint Use, and Blood Alcohol Level. Association for the Advancement of Automotive Medicine, 40th Annual Proceedings, accepted, 1996.*

Orange County

Orange County ranked third in the state for the total number of persons killed (49) and injured (2149) in alcohol-involved collisions in 1997, behind Los Angeles County (227 killed and 8253 injured) and San Diego County (75 killed and 2682 injured). *California Highway Patrol, 1998.*

-over-

DUI Laws and BAC

The amount of alcohol in a person's body is measured by the weight of the alcohol in a certain volume of blood. This is called the blood alcohol concentration, or "BAC." A driver's BAC can be measured by testing the blood, breath, urine or saliva. Breath testing is the primary method of testing used by law enforcement agencies.

Research shows that the vast majority of drivers, even those who are experienced drinkers, are significantly impaired at .08 BAC in steering, braking, changing lanes, and judgment.

The first 5 states who lowered the legal BAC limit from .10 to .08 (California, Maine, Oregon, Utah and Vermont) experienced a 16% reduction in the proportion of fatal crashes with a fatally injured driver whose BAC was over .08 as compared to 5 states that retained the .10 limit.

If you are arrested for driving under the influence, the following will happen:

- Your license will be immediately taken away by the arresting officer

- A 30-day temporary license will be issued by the DMV

- You will face fines between \$390 to \$1,000 and could serve between 96 hours to 6 months in jail for your first conviction

- On your second conviction, jail time will be at least 90 days to one year

- On your fourth conviction within seven years, you are looking at a prison term of two to four years. *CA Office of Traffic Safety.*

Who Is Driving Drunk?

From 1986 to 1996, intoxication rates decreased for drivers of all age groups involved in fatal crashes. Drivers 16 to 20 years old experienced the largest decrease in intoxication rates (41%), followed by drivers 21 to 24 years old (25%).

In a national survey in 1996, an estimated 23 percent (38 million) of drivers used alcohol only within two hours prior to driving in the past year. An estimated 5 percent (9 million) of drivers operated a motor vehicle within two hours of drug use with or without alcohol. SAMHSA: *Driving after alcohol or drug use: findings from the 1996 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse*

In a 1996 survey, it was found to be more common for males (31%) to drive after alcohol use than females (14%). *Ibid.*

Drivers age 21 to 29 drive the greatest proportion of their miles drunk. *Ibid.*

Source (unless otherwise noted): National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Dept. of Transportation, Washington D.C., 1998. www.nhtsa.dot.gov



ADEPT

405 West 5th Street • Suite 211 • Santa Ana, CA 92701 • (714) 834-4052 • Fax (714) 667-3968